

Metro

Two city detectives accused of dealing in drugs

The accused officers served in a special Crime Suppression Unit.

By Robert Patrick
and Jeremy Kohler
ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

ST. LOUIS • FBI agents arrested two St. Louis police officers Friday after the men were indicted on charges of planting evidence, stealing money, arresting an innocent man and dealing in drugs.

Both officers, Bobby Lee Garrett, 48, and his partner, Vincent Carr, 46, were suspended without pay following their arrest, which has triggered a review by prosecutors of cases they handled.

FBI Special Agent John Gillies said an investigation of the two officers and others is continuing. Carr faces charges of distributing a controlled substance, conspiracy to commit fraud, making

false statements and obstruction of justice. Garrett faces the same charges, as well as theft of government property.

A grand jury indictment against them was handed down Thursday and unsealed Friday.

Garrett is accused of stealing \$3,500 in drug sale proceeds in August 2007 and \$2,000 the next month. Both men were involved in marijuana dealing in August 2007, the indictment charges, although details about that were scarce.

The most detailed allegation concerns the search of a two-family dwelling in the 1400 block of Arlington Avenue in June 2008.

Garrett and Carr had obtained a search warrant June 5 for a home on the first floor, claiming that a man known only as "Black" was selling crack cocaine and storing money and drugs there.

Officers did seize drugs and guns from the first floor the next day, the charges say. But Garrett

is accused of taking drugs, about \$32,000 cash and a loaded pistol from the second-floor residence and putting them on the first floor, keeping all but \$3,710 of the cash.

The search warrant did not cover the second-floor apartment, and Carr and Garrett never told prosecutors about that search, the charges state. They also never told prosecutors that the second-floor resident had confessed to having drugs, cash and a gun and told officers where to find it, or included that information in police reports, prosecutors say. That man was not charged.

Carr and Garrett did arrest the building's owner and booked him on charges involving the drugs and contraband found in the house. Carr later asked prosecutors not to file charges against him.

Both men lied to FBI agents investigating the case and hid their

notes from the arrest and search, the indictment alleges.

Carr could not be reached for comment Friday.

"Anybody can make allegations," said Garrett's lawyer, Chet Pleban.

"I have been in this line of work for 34 years and it comes as no shock to me that people who are accused of criminal acts and have a criminal history make complaints against police officers," he said. "Certainly, I'll be anxious to see what they think they can prove."

A statement from the Police Department said it had cooperated with the FBI for months and had removed both men from street duty upon learning of the investigation.

Both were on the Crime Suppression Unit, created in January 2007 by then-Chief Joe Mokwa to address a rising crime rate. The unit was staffed with 55 officers — one of the department's biggest deployments.

Officers accustomed to wearing uniforms and driving marked patrol cars were issued unmarked cars and allowed to dress in plain clothes. They were given free-

dom to identify crime hot spots and aggressively pursue chronic criminals.

By year's end, the unit had made 1,625 arrests, seized 257 weapons and recovered 359 stolen vehicles, the department said. Mokwa repeatedly credited the unit for driving down the city's crime rate.

U.S. Attorney Catherine Hanaway said Friday that her office has either delayed or declined to file cases in which Carr and Garrett were involved. "Since we became aware of the allegations contained in the indictment, we have carefully scrutinized any case that these officers have been involved in," she said.

St. Louis Circuit Attorney Jennifer Joyce said her office was reviewing cases brought by the officers and that a supervisor would review each to see how it might be affected by the federal charges.

Hanaway and Joyce both acknowledged that the charges may trigger complaints or appeals from those convicted in cases involving the two officers.

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September 30, 2008

Mr. Shawn Fields - Inmate 100045

c/o St. Louis Justice Center

200 S Tucker

St. Louis, MO 63102

On **May 24, 2007**, monies in the amount of **\$452.00** in U.S. currency were seized from you connected to a criminal investigation, reported under police report CN **07-037450** and case number **PD-07X0282**.

Forfeiture proceedings related to this seizure have ceased and the seized monies are to be returned to you. The St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department has been informed that you are currently incarcerated at the aforementioned facility. You can authorize the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department to release these seized monies to another party on your behalf. If you would like to do so, fill out the attached form, which will identify the person to whom you wish to receive these funds for you. After we receive your authorization, we will contact your designee to set up an appointment. Your designee will have to appear in person at the assigned time.

This form must be filled out completely, notarized and then sent back to the Asset Removal Unit of the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department.

1. You must completely identify yourself.
2. You must completely identify the person that you wish to receive these funds, to include this person's name, date of birth, social security number and a valid mailing or residential address.
3. Type or print your name, then sign and date the form. (*witnessed by a notary*)
4. Have the form notarized by a notary.
5. Return this letter, along with the completed attached form to:

**St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department
Asset Removal Unit
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St. Louis, MO 63103**

If you have any questions regarding the returning of this money, contact the Asset Removal Unit at **(314) 444-5649**. (We are not able to accept collect calls.)

The Asset Removal Unit
Metropolitan Police Department
(314) 444-5649

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(Provided in attached letter)

Based upon my incarceration at _____, I do hereby authorize the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department to release this money to _____, date of birth _____, social security number of _____, residing at _____, phone number _____.
(Provide complete address, including city, state and zip code)
(Provide number for us)

I hereby release the Board of Police Commissioners and St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department from any claims or future actions related to this notice of release in which I have designated and identified the person I wish to receive these monies on my behalf.

Name: _____
(Type or print)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Subscribed and sworn before me on _____

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My commission expires on _____